



We exist to educate and empower parents in Utah to advocate for their children.

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2-15-22

Dear House Government Operations Committee Members:

The Utah State Constitution recognizes that: "a parent has the right, obligation, responsibility, and authority to raise, manage, train, educate, provide and care for...the parent's children," and we ask that the Utah Legislature support systems and positions that facilitate a parent's involvement in their children's education.

The National Education Service studies have shown that the greatest predictor of academic achievement is parental engagement in their children's education.[1] Over the past two years we have experienced a trend of parents feeling disenfranchised from their children's education. Many times parents do not know what to do or where to turn when they experience a problem with their children's education. This is one reason Utah Parents United was created and why we have had so many parents join us.

We feel creating the position of an Ombudsman to support parents will give parents the tools they need to find solutions when problems arise. It is expensive to hire legal help and many parents do not have extra money in their budget to retain legal help.

We also appreciate the role of the Ombudsman to make "recommendations to eliminate barriers and obstacles to meaningful parent and community involvement in public education."

We ask that you give HB337 a favorable recommendation to support a collaborative relationship between parents and those involved in educating our children.

Sincerely,

The Parents of Utah Parents United

[1]. PTA, N. (2000). *Building Successful Partnerships: A Guide for Developing Parent and Family Involvement Programs*. (pp. 11-12). Bloomington, Indiana: National PTA, National Education Service.